

Erosion Control Preparedness – Annual Update

Without erosion control many highway construction sites would turn into muddy messes that send soil into our lakes and streams every time it rains. To protect Washington's waters, WSDOT prepares Temporary Erosion and Sediment Control plans and takes steps to prevent erosion and pollution of water such as planting grass and building ponds, on all projects that disturb soil. To evaluate the effectiveness of these plans, twenty-one active projects (fifteen in western Washington and six in eastern Washington) with potential for erosion problems were inspected in the fall of 2005 prior to the rainy season.

Overall, the annual inspection results have demonstrated a steady improvement since 2003. In 2005, improvements were the result of better implementation of Temporary Erosion and Sediment Control plans and because many of this year's projects had a lower erosion risk as they were nearly completed by October. Two assessment measures decreased in 2005. Access route stabilization, which prevents the tracking of mud from construction sites onto nearby streets, decreased due to eastern Washington projects that hadn't yet installed rock stabilized entrances. The other measure, protecting cut and fill slopes, possibly decreased due to dry October weather allowing construction of cut and fill slopes to extend later in the season.

Erosion and Sediment Control Assessment Results

Assessment Measure		2003	2004	2005	2004 to 2005 Status
Excellent	Control other pollutants from impacting water quality	**	100%	100%	stable
	Dewatering	71%	100%	100%	stable
Good	Delineate clearing limits	100%	100%	95%*	stable
	Control flow rates	84%	100%	95%*	stable
	Sediment control BMPs installed on time	90%	100%	95%*	stable
	Manage project erosion/sediment control BMPs Proactively	75%	80%	90%	improved
	Channels for temporary stormwater conveyance are Stabilized	64%	73%	87%	improved
	Storm drain inlet protection	82%	83%	86%*	stable
	Erosion control BMPs installed on time (stabilize soils)	**	67%	86%	improved
	Access routes prevent tracking of mud onto streets	69%	91%	82%	decreased
Fair	Protect cut & fill slopes	50%	89%	79%	decreased
	Amount of disturbed soil covered with erosion control BMPs	45%	65%	70%*	stable
Poor	Maintain BMPs	70%	50%	67%	improved

*Stable performance status was achieved for all measures that remained within 5% of the previous years' rating.

**Two new categories have been added since the 2003 report.

Strategy for Improving Performance

In 2005, efforts to improve performance focused on the five assessment measures (shaded in grey above) that fell into the "Poor" and "Fair" categories (GNB, December 31, 2004); and utilized increased technical assistance, improved contract enforcement, and targeted training. These efforts have led to improvements in four of the five assessment measures. Based on the success of this approach, WSDOT will continue to focus technical assistance and training in 2006 on the assessment measures that fell into the "Poor" and "Fair" categories in 2005. Training will also focus on proactive erosion control to improve performance in the coming year.